Work With Your Body's Natural Processes to Control Hunger

Last time, you learned strategies for cutting calories when you don't like to cook. Whether you like to cook or not, hunger can send you running to the kitchen! Hunger pangs can create chaos while you're on a diet. It can be hard to concentrate on work, family, or anything else when you're hungry.

Luckily, there are several ways to alleviate this situation, which is the topic of today's lesson.

Use these tips to control hunger pangs and stick to your diet at the same time:

1. **Get back into the habit of eating breakfast.** It's easier to prevent the pangs than to treat them, so eating breakfast is important.
    - **Breakfast can help you control blood sugar levels throughout the day and stop hunger pangs from ruining your diet.** It's important to eat a complete breakfast that combines carbohydrates, proteins, and healthy fats into one meal.
2. **Eat protein.** Protein can make you feel satisfied after a meal or snack, so you're less likely to crave other foods.
    - Select food that has protein and still fits your diet. For example, nuts and seeds are a healthy source of protein. Peanut butter and other butters, such as almond butter, also pack a healthy serving of protein.
3. **Chew well and eat slowly.** If you swallow your food without chewing it enough, then it becomes more difficult to feel full. The rate at which you eat affects your stomach hormones *and* how you feel.
    - A study, titled "Eating slowly increases the postprandial response of the anorexigenic gut hormones, peptide YY and glucagon-like peptide-1," found that eating slowly was better. The researchers discovered eating too quickly affected the release of stomach hormones related to feeling full.
    - **Researchers recommend eating slowly, so the stomach hormones that make you feel full have a chance to become active.**

4. **Chew gum in between meals.** Researchers have found that gum can help you avoid temptation and stay on your diet. A study from the University of Rhode Island found that chewing gum encouraged people to eat less during the day.

5. **Eat potatoes.** Potatoes can be a useful tool for fighting hunger pangs. They have a resistant starch that takes longer to digest, so you feel full for a greater length of time. **You won't feel hungry while you're still trying to digest the potato you had for lunch.**

    - It's important to eat healthy preparations of potatoes, rather than potato chips and French fries. Baked or steamed potatoes can help you stay on your diet.

6. **Add more grapefruits.** These citrus fruits can help you control hunger while providing more vitamin C. Grapefruits can help control blood sugar levels, so you avoid the dangerous spikes that lead to hunger pangs. **Researchers at Osaka University found that even the smell of grapefruit may help you lose weight by suppressing your appetite.**

    - Fresh grapefruits are easy to add to your diet. They can be part of a fruit salad or smoothie for breakfast. They can also be cut into small pieces for a quick snack.

7. **Use food aromas advantageously. Smelling certain foods without eating them can help you control hunger pangs.** Researchers have found that different aromas can be used to feel full.

    - In a study, titled "Food aroma affects bite size," researchers discovered that people took smaller bites of food with strong aromas like onions, garlic, or peppers. They also noticed that controlling the scent of the food affected how much people ate.

Hunger pangs don't have to destroy your diet. By planning ahead and using these strategies, you can stay on your diet and subdue your cravings.

Sometimes, it seems that you can't help but give in to your eating triggers, no matter how easy the strategies are that help you cope. If you find that this often happens to you, strengthening your self-control will benefit you. Luckily, the next lesson will help you strengthen your self-control.

Here's what you need to do today:

Research ideas for protein-rich snacks. Make a list of at least 15 ideas for low-calorie snacks that are good sources of protein. Each week, pick several of these snacks and

keep the ingredients for them handy. The next time you feel hungry in between meals, enjoy a protein snack to keep hunger at bay.